

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00088 200701Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 /071 W  
-----075268 202141Z /70

R 200410Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8923  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0088

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, 4 DIMPTD  
TAGS: PDEV PDIP EAID LA RP  
SUBJECT: LAO-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS

REF: VIENTIANE 0046

INTRODUCTION: THERE FOLLOWS AN OVERVIEW OF PHILIPPINE-  
LAO RELATIONS DRAWN FROM OBSERVATIONS MADE BY A SENIOR  
DIPLOMAT IN THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE.  
SEPARATE MESSAGES DEAL WITH LAO RELATIONS WITH EACH OF  
THE OTHER ASEAN STATES WITH MISSIONS IN VIENTIANE. WE  
WILL SUBMIT A FINAL MESSAGE SUMMARIZING LAO-ASEAN  
RELATIONS. END INTRODUCTION.

1. PHILIPPINE-LAO RELATIONS ARE QUIESCENT WITH LITTLE  
INDICATION THAT THERE WILL BE ANY CHANGE IN THEIR  
STATUS IN 1978. A FORMAL INVITATION FOR LPDR FOREIGN  
MINISTER PHOUNE SIPRASEUTH TO VISIT THE PHILIPPINES HAS  
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PAGE 02 VIENTI 00088 200701Z

NOT BEEN ACTED UPON BY THE LAO GOVERNMENT DESPITE  
REPEATED PROMPTINGS BY THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY. A  
SENIOR PHILIPPINE EMBOFF TOLD US THAT THERE IS VIRTUALLY  
NO POLITICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND  
THAT THE ISSUE OF U.S. BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES, SPECI-  
FICALLY, HAS NEVER ARISEN IN LAO-PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT  
REMAINS CONCERNED BY LAO PRESS ATTACKS ON ASEAN, BUT IT

HAS NEVER FELT CONSTRAINED TO RESPOND TO ANY OF THESE ATTACKS.

2. IN 1976, THE LAO ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE A PHILIPPINE OFFER TO SEND TWO AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS TO LAOS, BUT DESPITE REPEATED QUERIES BY THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY, THE LAO HAVE TAKEN NO ACTION ON THE OFFER. THEY SAY SIMPLY THAT THE MATTER IS UNDER STUDY. THERE IS CURRENTLY NO OTHER PHILIPPINE AID OR AID OFFER TO LAOS, THOUGH THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING THE LPDR EMERGENCY DROUGHT ASSISTANCE APPEAL WHICH IT RECEIVED IN JANUARY, AS DID OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVEING RELATIONS WITH LAOS. THE PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY ARGUED TO HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT IF THE PHILIPPINES COULD GIVE 1,000 BAGS OF RICE TO VIETNAM, IT COULD CERTAINLY PROVIDE SOME ASSISTANCE TO LAOS AS WELL.

3. THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE MAINTAINS A VERY LOW PROFILE, REFLECTING THE LIMITED RANGE OF LAO-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS. AS EARLY FALL, 1977, RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CURRENT AMBASSADOR (WHO IS DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS) THAT THE EMBASSY BE CLOSED HAD APPARENTLY BEEN REFECTED BY THE PHILIPPINE FOREIGN MINISTRY, BUT REDUCTION OF THE MISSION IN VIENTIANE (TO THE LEVEL OF CHARGE D'AFFAIRES) REMAINS A POSSIBILITY.

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PAGE 03 VIENTI 00088 200701Z

4. A SENIOR PHILIPPINE DIPLOMAT IN VIENTIANE DESCRIBES THE EMBASSY AS "BASICALLY A LISTENING POST." THE DIPLOMAT EXPLAINED THAT THE PHILIPPINES HAVE USED VIENTIANE AS A POINT THROUGH WHICH TO MAINTAIN AN INFREQUENT DIALOGUE WITH KAMPUCHA. SHE ADDED THAT SINCE THE PHILIPPINE MISSION IN HANOI WAS HEADED BY A VERY YOUNG DIPLOMAT, THE VIENTIANE POST ASSISTED IN THE MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SRV AS WELL.

5. THERE ARE VIRTUALLY NO COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN LAOS AND THE PHILIPPINES. A FILIPINO-OWNED GUEST HOUSE/HOTEL WAS SEIZED BY THE LPDR IN 1976 ALONG WITH OTHER RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT FILIPINO PROPERTY. THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN SEEKING COMPENSATION FOR THE FILIPINO PROPERTY OWNERS AND ALSO IN PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF SOME FIFTEEN PHILIPPINE CITIZENS AND CHILDREN OF PHILIPPINE/LAO MARRIAGES RESIDENT IN LAOS.

6. COMMENT: IN ADDITION TO THE AMBASSADOR, THE

PHILIPPINE DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE IN LAOS COMPRISES TWO  
OTHER OFFICERS. THE EMBASSY IS ACTIVE IN "LISTENING  
POST" ACTIVITY, AND THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF THE  
EMBASSY'S MINISTER COUNSELOR, HAS A GOOD REPUTATION FOR  
PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF THE SMALL FILIPINO COMMUNITY  
HERE. THE EMBASSY REGULARLY PARTICIPATES IN ASEAN  
FUNCTIONS, THOUGH PERHAPS REFLECTING THE FACT THAT THE  
AMBASSADOR SERVES AS DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, THE  
EMBASSY APPEARS SLIGHTLY RESERVED IN ITS RELATIONS WITH  
ITS ASEAN PARTNERS. THE REPORTED RECOMMENDATION BY THE  
AMBASSADOR THAT THE MISSION BE CLOSED (PARA 3) IS  
DIFFICULT TO ACCOUNT FOR AND PERHAPS REFLECTS HIS OWN  
PERSONAL WISHES. (THE RECOMMENDATION WAS A SURPRISE TO  
THE PHILIPPINE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND TO THE EMBASSY'S  
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PAGE 04 VIENTI 00088 200701Z

MINISTER COUNSELOR, WHO SOULDERS MOST OF THE BURDENS  
OF RUNNING THE EMBASSY.)  
ROBERTS

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## Message Attributes

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